

Message Text

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20

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05

CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 XMB-02 OPIC-03

LAB-04 SIL-01 AGR-05 L-03 SAB-01 DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01

/101 W

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R 112156Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5097

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

PANCANAL

USSOUTHCOM

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 5594

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, PN

SUBJECT: BANANAS: TORRIJOS ASSURES WORKERS REGARDING STILL
PENDING GOP-UB AGREEMENT

REF: PANAMA 5536

1. LOCAL PRESS REPORTS THAT GENERAL TORRIJOS, WHILE OFFICIATING
AT CEREMONIES SEPTEMBER 10 IN WHICH 40 CAMPESINO FAMILIES TOOK
OCCUPANCY OF NEW HOUSES AT PROGRESO IN THE BANANA-GROWING
DISTRICT OF CHIRIQUI PROVINCE, STATED THAT THERE WAS AS YET NO
FINAL DESIGN FOR THE "TRANSFER" OF THE BANANA COMPANY, BUT
REITERATED THAT THE TRANSFER WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE
WORKERS IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE THE PRODUCTION NOT OF 30 MILLION
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BUT RATHER 40 MILLION BOXES OF BANANAS ANNUALLY AND

GUARANTEE A MARKET FOR THE FRUIT. IN RESPONSE TO A WORKER'S INQUIRY CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF THE GOP GIVING SUCH HOUSES WITHOUT PAYMENT, TORRIJOS SAID THAT HE DID NOT WANT THESE CAMPESINOS TO BE LIKE THOSE "PARASITES" IN THE CANAL ZONE WHO WERE GIVEN A ROOF AND EVEN A REFRIGERATOR FREE AND NOW WANT TO REMAIN IN A PLACE THAT DOES NOT BELONG TO THEM. TORRIJOS WAS ACCOMPANIED TO PROGRESO BY THE VISITING PRESIDENT OF THE YUGOSLAV LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, DR. GLIGOROV (PANAMA 5481), AND THE YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR TO PANAMA.

2. COMMENT: TORRIJOS' PUBLIC CONFIRMATION THAT FINAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN GOP AND UNITED BRANDS ARE STILL AN OPEN QUESTION AND THAT GOP SEEKS GUARANTEE OF MARKET (WHICH PRESUMABLY ONLY UB AT THIS POINT COULD PROVIDE) APPEARS TO BODE WELL FOR PRESENT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES. LATTER HAVE NOW INDICATED TO EMBASSY THAT FORMAL TALKS ARE TO BE RESUMED TODAY, SEPTEMBER 11.
JORDEN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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